APPENDIX F.

Concluding remarks of the Dewan at the Supplementary Session 2nd May 1919.

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Concluding Remarks of the Dewan at the Supplementary Session of the Mysore Representative Assembly.

2nd May 1919.

Gentlemen,

As the session has already been prolonged beyond its appointed time, I do not wish to make any lengthy remarks but would only make just a few observations before closing the proceedings.

As stated by me in my opening speech, the work before us was a particularly heavy one; for, in addition to all the postponed 200 and odd subjects of the last October Session, we had the full programme of the supplementary Session to deal with, including besides the Budget, 51 General Subjects. I do not know what the feeling of the members is as regards the work that has been done during these 5 days, but if there has been any disappointment that some of the subjects did not receive adequate attention or time, I hope the members will regard their disappointment with some indulgence. I will not refer in detail to the important representations that have been made during our discussions. Most of them relate to questions which had come up before this Assembly on more than one occasion and I have, as far as possible, endeavoured to indicate to this Assembly, the lines on which the Government policy is likely to be followed in regard to all these pending questions. I hope those representatives who have received a negative answer to their representations will forgive me for my candid manner of disposing of them and also consider the practical difficulties which have stood in the way of granting their requests. I desire to compliment the members on the moderation of their views and the mode of their expression. I desire particularly to congratulate this Assembly on the very able manner in which they have discussed the Budget and thank them on behalf of Government for the very valuable suggestions made by them as regards details as well as the general financial policy.

The technical points raised have been already replied to by the Comptroller and there is very little that I can add to the speech that I made explaining the Budget and the financial policy of the State on the opening day. It is gratifying to see that a large number of representatives are taking part every year in this budget discussion and although the time at our disposal was very limited, no less than 40 members took such part this time. The various requests made in regard to additional expenditure under the detailed heads in almost all the main departments of the administration have been carefully noted. It is not possible to make provision for all the individual cases at this stage, but the requests will be referred to the respective Heads of Departments who may, by reappropriation, find funds out of their total allotments to provide at least for a few of the urgent requests which may, in their opinion, be carried out in the next year. In analysing all the budget speeches, I find that there are a few questions which seem to have received priority of attention. Under Education, it has been urged that there should be more High Schools, more Anglo-Vernacular Schools, more Anglo-Hindustani Schools and that all the grant-in-aid schools should be converted into Government institutions. There is also a very strong feeling expressed that education should be free in all grades—primary upwards. I have already explained that our educational expenditure as anticipated in the budget, stands at the very high figure of 41,74,000 which is 5,44,000 in excess of the expenditure of the current year representing an increase by 14·98 per cent in one year. The general feeling that, if the income-tax is to be levied, the levy therefrom should be ear-marked to make education free is, I am afraid, not capable of realization. It is true that there was some assurance given by my distinguished predecessor that such a levy may be ear-marked for purposes of education. I put it to you that if the State increases its educational expenditure at the rate that it is doing from year to year, they will have more than fulfilled the pledge that was given, for, in all probability, not only the total amount of the realization from income-tax but double of that sum has to be additionally spent to meet the various demands under education

which are almost of an obligatory character. We have launched into a policy from which it will be impossible, nay, suicidal to go back. Educational finance is a matter of considerable importance but at the same time, one involving many difficult problems. As promised during the discussions on more than one occasion, it is proposed to publish at an early date, a Government resolution on the subject which will review in a comprehensive manner, our past policy, the present position of our institutions, our organization, the defects, the anomalies, the inconveniences and draw-backs and suggesting measures for removing them and for providing equal facilities to all classes as far as possible, while consistently adhering to general principles already enunciated. In that resolution, certain proposals will also find a place for development, year to year, thereby providing for a stage of progress which is hoped to be realized during the next five years. When you see that resolution and read its contents, you may perhaps realise to some extent, the difficulties of the problems involved. For the present I can only say that all the representations made at this Assembly both of a general as well as of a special kind affecting education in all its grades and subsidiary educational problems such as types of schools, curricula, fees, scholarships, hostels, school buildings, pay of teachers, inspection, etc., will all be dealt with as exhaustively as possible and sufficient time will be given for the consideration by the public of the views of Government, before any practical action is taken. Educational reforms are urgent and immediate. Members have complained that expenditure under many heads is disproportionate to the quality of the work done and in many cases that expenditure has been recommended to be altogether discontinued on the ground of inefficiency and absence of good purpose. Whatever may be the case so far as these complaints are concerned, Government realise that a consistent and sound educational policy which will benefit all classes equally and provide facilities to all likewise, should be one of the first planks in their future programme of work.

Repeated representations have been made regarding a revision of the Settlement procedure and abolition of Irrigation Cess. I have already given replies indicating that Government are ready to bring their re-settlement procedure into line with that prevailing in the Bombay Presidency where the settlement report is published in the taluk. The irrigation cess question involves financial loss but apart from that, the Government are prepared to examine the rules of liability to pay the cess and a Government order will be shortly issued on the subject. The Government are ready to favourably consider the request to enlarge the Budget Finance Committee by appointing two more members from this Assembly and also to publish the Government Order on the Finance Committee's proposals.

In regard to other matters, tank restoration, leasing lands from the Amrut Mahal kavals, larger increase in medical aid and sanitation, extension of village sites, larger grants for towns and minor municipalities, increase of potgi to village officers, larger grants to the Agricultural Department to provide for agricultural staff for every taluk, improvement of the Veterinary Department, improvement of the pay and prospects of the Sub-Assistant Surgeons and Compounders, provision for an Ayurvedic and Unani College, speedier extension of the judicial reforms to the Malnad, Land Mortgage Bank and increased grants for the Malnad Improvement, etc., there is little or no difference of opinion as to the utility of all these matters.

There was unfortunately no reasonable suggestion forthcoming from the Members to effect adequate reduction of expenditure and thus meet a very substantial portion of the increase that would be necessary in sanctioning the proposals referred to above. The question mainly, therefore, is one of ways and means which must be settled gradually and in consistency with the proportionate growth of our resources.

The question of giving more time to this Assembly for taking up the budget discussion is difficult, unless this Supplementary Session is deferred to June. The matter will be further considered with reference to the general opinion expressed.

I again plead for a truer sense of proportion in dealing with all measures and schemes involving additional expenditure. There is a feeling expressed by some of the representatives that our Administration is top-heavy, that unnecessary appointments have been created, and that the work of the Administration could proceed just as well if not better, by curtailing establishments in the higher ranks. This

is a matter in which I would deprecate any dogmatic expression of opinion. For the present, I can assure this Assembly that in reviewing the finances of the State and our present position, it will be my duty to go into this question of establishments as minutely as possible; and if the complaint appears, even to the slightest extent, justifiable, Government will not hesitate to effect the necessary retrenchments. 'Retrenchment' is a favourite and a very plausible phrase rather loosely and carelessly used, without due regard to the necessities of administration or to the limitations which a progressive Government is tied under, when it resolves not to stand still but to advance. I have known of cases in which retrenchment has been ordered simply for the love of retrenchment, thereby endangering the efficiency of the Administration and with the result that the clock of progress has been set back for several years. We should guard against this danger.

I have already enumerated the several important matters which it is proposed that Government should take up immediately, and it shall be my endeavour to fulfil that promise; and in so far as it lies in my power, I shall also take the public into my fullest confidence before His Highness' Government commit themselves to any definite course of action.

I thank you, gentlemen, for the trouble you have taken to come during this inconvenient part of the year to Mysore, to attend the Supplementary Session. I also thank you for the cordial co-operation you have afforded me in conducting the business. I now wish you all a safe return to your homes and declare the Session closed.

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